

Foreign Secretary to back Baltic countries to challenge the threat posed by Russia, Belarus and China

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss is today (Monday 11 October) meeting the foreign ministers of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to agree a joint approach to building stronger economic, security and technology partnerships to counter malign actors.

Thirty years after they regained their independence, Truss will reaffirm the UK's commitment to the Baltic countries and promise to work closely together to defend and advance freedom and democracy in the region.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

Britain supported the independence of the Baltic three in 1991 and thirty years on we still stand with them to advance the cause of liberty and protect our fundamental freedoms. Forging closer economic and security partnerships with allies like Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia will make us wealthier, safer and freer and put like-minded countries in a stronger position to face down bad actors.

I look forward to discussing how we can work together to build a global network of liberty and boost cooperation in vital areas like technology.

The UK is the lead nation for the NATO Battlegroup in Estonia, a clear sign of commitment to Baltic and European security. Ahead of the upcoming NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting in Riga next month, the Foreign Secretary will reiterate that the UK is prepared to be tough on those who do not play by the rules.

This year marks a century of relations between the UK, Latvia and Estonia, with Lithuania's 100 years due in 2022; and 30 years since the end of the Soviet occupation for the Baltic States.

The Foreign Secretary will also emphasise the need to work together to counter hostile activity from Russia; and will raise the recent migrant crisis on the Belarusian border, which Lukashenko appears to have engineered as an instrument to pressure our European partners. She will reiterate the UK's support and solidarity with Lithuania and Latvia in dealing with this situation.

Truss will focus large parts of the discussion on strengthening economic ties with the Baltic countries, including in areas like technology, in line with her vision to create closer trade, investment and tech ties between allies

and partners around the world.

She will host the 3 at Chevening House in Kent.